Globalization Theory and Reference to Aspects of Eastern Cape (South Africa) History

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2014

1. Introduction

Historians cannot escape the instantaneous global electronic flow of communication and information. The challenges they face are immense. Vast volumes of knowledge are immediately available on a worldwide scale, but fortunately, so is humankind's ability to deal with this global information glut in an electronic and orderly manner.

The positives above outweigh most other considerations. The immediate accessibility and the continued rapid growth of globalization of theory, bring new perspectives about the theory of globalization. From this stem three characteristics regarding modern sources of historical knowledge in general. They are: the *volume* of information, the *speed* of its growth, and the "*anywhereness*" thereof, are all collectively changing research methodologies comprehensively. Archives housing dusty old documents are not longer the only repositories available to historians, and modern libraries are noticeably different in most aspects, than they were ten years ago.

Today, globalization has become such an important field of research, that it has been included in e.g. most history, political science, and sociology courses, in progressive institutes of higher learning across the world. This paper suggests that contemporary globalization theory opens interesting methodological and re-interpretation possibilities relating to aspects of e.g. Eastern Cape historiography. As a result, this paper has two major objectives.

The first objective is to provide *an outline of two different approaches* to globalization theory (Hopkins 2002, 1-13). This is covered in sections 2-4. For conceptual clarity, a few observations about the term "globalization" are also required. Then the views of A.G. Hopkins and W. Scheuerman are dealt with in sections 3 and 4 respectively. This serves as the basis for the second research objective.

Based on combining these two seemingly dissimilar approaches, the second objective in section 5, proposes *an alternative analytical model as a framework for re-evaluation* of some aspects of Eastern Cape history.

Combined, these two research objectives serve as the justification for this paper. However, this paper is merely exploratory and the concluding observations need to be subjected to further empirical investigation.

2. The term "globalization"

Globalization is the process by which all human activities have the potential to realize (or are already realizing) a worldwide impact (e.g. of modern global business activities, or popular culture, e.g. rock music) on present-day global society as well as on our collective natural environment with its scare resources.

Recent literature indicates that globalization theory spans more than the traditional view that covered only the economic or political spheres of our lives. Secondly, it is questionable to view globalization as being synonymous with e.g. Westernization, or being linked to the power politics of any of the former superpowers. In reality, few (if any), human activities are excluded from processes that potentially have global consequences.

Characteristically, globalization is a modern term (word) for an old and ongoing (incomplete) phenomenon, regardless of how relative it might have been in relation to the prevailing geo-political world. Globalization represents fundamental changes in spatial and temporal existence of humankind and defies local and even international boundaries. The challenge is to re-search and re-interpret modern aspects of globalization in a historical sense against modern theories of globalization.

The word globalization was supposedly first used in the 1970s, but South African historian E.A. Walker wrote in 1959 that our history is of greater importance than merely local or even continental scale (Walker 1959, vi) and in so doing, he indirectly referred to the global connectedness of our history. Admittedly, at that time, Harlow and Wilkinson's terms "international" or "internationalization" respectively, might have been in vogue. The point remains, as we will see later, that globalization covers the local and international society and that in one way or another we are, and were, part thereof.

Then, in 1965, they made specific reference to "global" problems facing the world and suggested that historians should abandon their "local for universal perspectives" (Walker 1965, vi). In this regard, A.M. Lembede made the point about African nationalism in the mid-1940s, that "each nation makes its own peculiar contribution towards the general progress and welfare of mankind (Lembede 1945, 1). By implication, he referred to the wider than just local or regional influence, of people. This point is discussed later in section 5 below.

Whilst it could be argued that it is possible to write "global" history, we need to keep in mind that ambitious constructions of so-called "world" history have been attempted before – sometimes referred to as "history of civilizations," or more confidently, put forward as an alleged "world view" of history. H. Kohn for instance, wrote that the "age of nationalism represents the first period of *universal history*" (Kohn 1960, vii. Italics added) and similarly, Braudel claimed to have written "a new kind of history, *total history* (Braudel 1987, 1238). However, to undertake such ambitious histories, is easier said than done.

From a critical theorist's perspective, T.W. Adorno's contention was, that universal history would have to be equally construed and denied. Given the many world calamities around us, he argued, it would be difficult to plan for a better future world that should be manifested in a history that would unite past calamities with better prospects (Adorno: 2007, 320). A further point to grapple with is that historians need to be careful not to be caught up in semantic confusion or terminological synonyms (Danto 1971, 46-48).

Brief reference to the word "world" is required because of its close relationship with "globalization" but also because of its "local" cognitive content. Generally, the "world" constitutes everything that exists outside of us – e.g. the earth and heavenly bodies. In everyday language, we talk about the ancient "world" or e.g. the English-speaking "world." These two "worlds" refer to specific time and space realities that pertained either to ancient times, or predominantly modern English-speaking territories. Therefore, the specific "world" referred to, remains both universal and relative in the application to its historical context – e.g. in Barraclough's view, Rome can be regarded as the first universal "world" (or global) empire (Barraclough in Meyerhoff 1959, 3). The differences are clear. They derive from those engaged in conversation - specific to the perception of what they think "global" or "world" means.

The relevance of the above lies in the methodological necessity that when a new analytical model is presented in section 5 (and in so doing we refer to the British colonial empire or British colonial "world"), then we have to do so against the wider definitions of both "world" and "globalization." In a sense then, everything or any view, is stacked against the larger "world" or "global" backdrop of the prevailing time. The same is the case with the arrival of e.g. the 1820 Settlers.

However, we need to overcome certain limitations. The first limitation has to do with defining the words "world" or "global" history, as indicated. The issue is complex: what is included and what not in "world" or "global" history? How are the complexities of e.g. Euro-centrism resolved? A further limitation relates to sources. Historians need to balance primary sources, monographic work and synthetic works, as best possible. Their challenges are immense because of the vast scope of such history. Then, consider the problem that relates to

the structure of the related research. On what will the real focus be when attempting to write "world" or "global" history?

Notwithstanding, "world" history transcends national boundaries. Popular public demand requires such history, and modern technological developments necessitate them. The result is, that the historian is forced to engage in "world" history – however difficult to achieve. An added complication arises when we need to re-interpret and provide historical explanations of such grand undertakings.

3. A.G. Hopkins's views on globalization

3.1 Background

After a series of Millennium Lectures and one-day conferences organized by the Faculty of History at Cambridge University during their 1999/2000 academic year (Hopkins 2002, 1-18), A.G. Hopkins edited a book on globalisation. His analysis of four distinctive globalization periods, make them simultaneously important and appropriate for our research objectives.

As with most other terminologies, globalization is intricate because it is not one-dimensional in nature. 21st century Japan is an example. Literature suggests that although Japan might have "arrived relatively late" to globalization, its participation in, and shaping thereof, clearly refute the claims that globalization is exclusively a Western development. Secondly, globalization is not restricted to the political spheres of the lives of humankind. Instead, globalization comprises of a variety of forces that span across national boundaries with different timeframes manifesting itself in all spheres of our lives. These manifestations have trans-national reach – that is, they have *global* scope. However, one needs to be careful and not view this in absolute terms. In this regard, Hopkins refers to the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989; international demands for fair trade instead of free trade; civic consumers that call for the eradication of poverty and oppression etc., as examples of cross-border forces with relative global reach and scope.

We propose further contemporary examples as factors with global impact: e.g. the swine flue epidemic; global warming; international terrorism, or the current meltdown of the global economy; poverty; or take for instance, the term *class*. Class differentiation in societies date back to even before feudal times (Marx and Engels 2007, 219). Different levels of technological and economic development found in class differences, complicate our understanding of societal stratifications. Giddens for instance, argued: the complexity goes further, because within a particular class, identifiable class structuration prevails (Giddens 1973, 19-20, 82). This has been in existence from even before pre-literary times. The use of class, here, is not out of place. An analysis of the top fifty professions of the Settlers clearly

shows, specifically against the background of previous research (Gaskell 1833; Engels 2005; Thompson 1966), the presence of their own class differences long before they arrived in South Africa.

Hopkins held that historians were slow to participate in the origins, nature and consequences of globalization theory, and urged them to list globalization high on their research agendas. In so doing, present globalization research scope could be applied to historical diversity that would place relative "newness" of the process of globalization, in a wider historical debate.

3.2 Hopkins's classification of globalization periods

Any form of classification has its own inherent pitfalls and is usually criticized as being either too broad, too narrow, or that they present too many levels, therefore making them unacceptable. With globalization the problem is no different.

No "stage" of economic development, or "period" of globalization, falls neatly into absolute distinguishable or clearly defined compartments. Care must be taken not to simply replace e.g. Rostow's theory of the stages of economic growth, with new terminology, or assign "globalization" to any convenient synonym. Globalization is an incomplete historical process that recedes and advances at different places with different scope, speed and direction. Paradoxically therefore, globalization is also characterized by regional uniqueness. South African social engineering is most certainly widely debated in all social sciences in terms of its once relative pariah status. This does not exclude debates on post-1994 social reconstructive undertakings.

Hopkins's first globalization period is *archaic* globalization. This existed before present forms of industrialization, and predates the formation of nation-sates. It is a period that stretches from Byzantium times to *c.*1500 during which at least three archaic globalization networks are distinguishable: kings and warriors in search of wealth and honour in faraway lands; religious wanderers and pilgrims seeking traces of God in distant countries; and lastly, merchant princes and adventurers in search of new fortunes and fame. Their travels by sea or over land made territorial status fluid and resulted in the rise of modern cities. Consequently, their "universal" societal (or "world") systems and beliefs, came into "global" contact with others. From these new contacts, new phenomena of migrants, division of labour, and challenges of traditional state authority, emerged.

The second period was *proto*-globalization. This referred to political and economic developments that took place in Europe, Asia and parts of Africa between *c.*1600-1800. Politically speaking, proto-globalization is charcterised by the re-configuration of state systems, and economically, by the growth of finance and the development of pre-industrial

manufacturing. Both represent new manifestations of societal realities. For instance, competing systems of the military, strengthened links between territory, taxation and sovereignty. Together with these, the increasing monopoly of loyalty of subjects necessitated extended territories. This resulted in imperial acquisitions, increased trade, and developed new systems of exchange, to the extent that the 1760s were regarded as "the decade of globalization."

The third period of globalization - *modern* globalization, spans the period from *c.*1800 to the 1950s. At least two processess characterize this period: the rise of modern nation-states, and the spread of modern industrialization. Growth of national consciousness in a sovereign state is based on defined territorial boundaries. The resulting population growth and concentration brought a need for increased free trade. These factors were not disconnected from imperialism and war. Rather, they were synonymous with the political management of the growth of national identity and security of internal cohesion. Modern trends of labour migrations across boundaries became commonplace and brought changes in international socio-economic relations – e.g. contact with different constitutional, intellectual, cultural and religious systems, whilst property relations and productive forces changed. Colonial subjects were increasingly subjected to new European strategies of association and/or assimilation - the result was that at all levels of society, the world became smaller, and vastly so.

Then, since the *c.*1950s, *post-colonial* globalization represents the fourth period characterized by new types of supra-territorial organizations and new forms of regional integration. The modern nation-state is no longer regarded as the only driver of progress. Ex-colonial states were forced to make colonial concessions and there are clear examples of a "real" new economic order developing. Post-1945 decolonization in Africa is probably the most suitable example for our purposes.

The periodization and characteristics outlined above are not cast in stone and should not be seen as the final word on the topic. When integrated with a thematic approach to globalization, one would arrive at a better understanding to present a critical approach. Scheuerman's position presents the opportunity.

4. W. Scheuerman's view of globalization

The value of Scheuerman's contribution is found in the five basic concepts that he assigned to globalization (Scheuerman 2006, 1-13). Combined, they made up his explanatory model.

The first basic concept is *deterritorialization.* It is characterized by a multiplicity of social activities that occur, sometimes simultaneously (but does not have to be), irrespective of the geo-political location of participants. Today, many of these activities take place through high-speed technologies – telephones, video conferencing, audio-visual broadcasting, Internet, etc.

and clearly so over mega-distances. Historically the advent of steam, electricity and telegraphs abolished distances between societies. Through these (and other) technological means, modern inter- and intra-human activities became instantaneous regardless of former time and space constraints. Realistically then, deterritorialization represents the compression of territorial space.

Geographical territories and boundaries are no longer global obstacles to human contact. This "borderlessness" makes the *interconnectedness* of humankind, the second basic concept. Political boundaries are superseded, border controls between states are being made easier and the physical movement of humans and material goods across boundaries expedited. The flow of ideas in cyberspace is instantaneous for, and amongst different people at the same time. This accessibility and instantaneousness of interconnectedness take place in a planned and structured manner that is predictable, controlled and regularized. These realities place ordinary people in control of their lives in a manner they prefer to be, and when not, bring them into conflict with traditional institutions of authority.

The *speed* or *velocity* of human social activities constitutes the next basic concept. Central is the proliferation of modern super high-speed transportation, communication and information technologies. Instantaneous activities across all boundaries are obvious, but the speed at which modern society functions, highlights the differences in the nature and scope of new social activities amongst humans. Undoubtedly, the rate of change in the global village is not disputed.

Despite the above, globalization remains a *long-term process.* Whilst we concede that this is a vague and ambiguous concept, the best we can re-state, is that it is a relatively new term for an old process that did not suddenly develop in recent decades or during one generation. Globalization has been taking place since the days of ancient civilizations. This shows that conceptual developments about past and current events indicate the potential of knowledge-growth in all sciences that function on more than one level.

Finally, globalization is a *multi-pronged* process that takes place on all levels of society - not only the economic, political and cultural (and never did) spheres. For instance, cross-border flow of consumer products to all corners of the globe is a 24/7-process. This implies the multi-levels of human activities required to make such happen. Simultaneously, supranational forms of social and economic lawmaking and regulation, equals the proliferation of supranational organizations involved in these activities.

It is against the above, that we propose a new model for historical interpretation.

5. A proposed analytical model for analysis

Our proposition is that aspects of e.g. 1820 Settler history can be interpreted against an alternative model of globalization theory. The following simplified matrix combines the two above approaches to present the applicability of the *modern* globalization period (*c.*1800 – 1950s) to 1820 Settler history.

Explanatory globalization model for aspects of 1820 Settler history

	Globalization periods			
	***Archaic* globalization**	***Proto-* globalization**	***Modern* globalization**	***Post-colonial* globalization**
Basic globalization concepts	Byzantium to *c.*1500.	*c.*1600 to 1800.	*c.*1800 to 1950.	From *c.*1950s.
Deterritorialization				
Interconnectedness				
Speed-velocity				
Long-term process				
Multi-pronged process				

Three observations regarding this model are necessary. Hopkins's basic globalization concepts are not exhaustive. In fairness, the objective was not to critically analyze his views, and hence the temptation to "improve" on such, is resisted. A related problem is the difficulty regarding the distinction about the scope between the different basic concepts because characteristics of one, are found in others. Secondly, this is not the place to analyze Scheuerman's contentious periodization of the four globalization periods. Thirdly, the above simplification of the complex globalization process is provisional and serves as an outline to stimulate future debate about new theory for historical research agenda/s.

The fact that ± 4,000 Settlers emigrated from different locations in England (Turpin 1964, 1) to the Eastern Cape, represents one aspect of the basic concepts of *deterritorialization.* The Settlers took part in emigration regardless of their diverse geo-political backgrounds and arrived in a country ill prepared for the future and with no knowledge of the history of the region. Some historians argue that the scheme failed because the Settlers found it impractical to farm, and most drifted to towns (Afigbo 1986, 242). After two years, about 50% of the Settlers left their allotted land/s. Their journey to the Lower Albany District covered vast distances. Communication by (and with) them was faster than would previously have been.

Communication was by governmental decrees, post on horseback or on foot, etc. The first telegraphs however, changed communication forever.

By contrast, the Xhosa people had a relatively good conception of the southern continent. There are clear indications (also in archaeological literature) that they travelled long ago over great distances from the Eastern Cape to the Cape and as far north long the coast to Delagoa Bay. In both instances, increased contact with and between different peoples, changed territorial experiences.

The history of migration becomes ever important specifically given modern quantifiable data that relates to global migration. No only is the flow of goods and services "migrating," but so are people. The number of people living outside their country of birth grew from 120 million in the 1990s to about 200 million in 2008. This makes global migrants the 5th most "populous country" on earth.

Secondly, Africans and Europeans were both colonizers of the frontier regions in South Africa and this constitute their *interconnectedness.* In the case of the Settlers, the grouping together of about a thousand different families - in most instances not knowing anybody else but their immediate family members, connected strangers with different backgrounds and aspirations, for a long time to come. First they were grouped together in emigration parties, then crammed into confined spaces on their respective ships, thereafter on ox-wagons travelling to their allotted land/s, and finally, settled relatively densely in the small Lower Albany district. After their settlement, they had much in common – e.g. farming needs as well as security considerations that would continue into the 20th century.

Careful reading of Xhosa history clearly supports the view of forced high-level multi-cultural interaction as a result of the many peoples classified as Xhosa's. The Xhosa population between *c.*1800 of between 40,000 – 60,000 increased to 70,000 – 100,000 by *c.* 1850. The partly seasonal Xhosa movement and steady migration brought challenges for peaceful co-existence in open and closed frontier relationships. Close scrutiny of a map provided by Milton, reveals the close geo-political proximities between Nguni, San, Thembu and Gonqua as early as 1650 (Milton 1983, 18). This accelerated over the next 200 years.

The *speed* and *velocity* with which the Settlers' immigration took place, was profound. Fast and cheap transportation has been regarded as one of the main drivers of the Industrial Revolution (Cipolla 1987, 13). Since the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, the process accelerated – specifically during the reign of lord Charles Somerset, when settlements took place even as far as the Orange River. From the moment when the emigration scheme was conceived to the eventual settlement, made the process relatively short. The advent of the steam age reduced sailing time to the Cape to 3-4 months. Movements of military personnel, missionaries and merchants traders, explain the great distances they frequently travelled over

land to conduct their business. The same can be said of Xhosa as a result their contact with Europeans and other groups.

Fourthly, White settlement in South Africa was a *long-term process*. Not only does the Sahara Desert form a natural barrier (Oliver and Atmore 1987, 1) for overland travel to central and other parts of Africa, but also, the typical evenness of the African coastline with relatively few natural bays and inlets or peninsulas (Afrigbo 1986, 1), made accessibility difficult. For almost 500 years, Europeans have steadily penetrated the southern African coastal regions *en route* to the Indies, until the first permanent European settlement at the Cape took place in 1652.

The next noticeable immigration were the French Huguenots in 1682, followed by the 1820 Settlers, later Indians arrived in 1860, "Uitlanders" arrived in 1896, Chinese labourers in 1907, and African migrant labourers consistently thereafter. We need to keep in mind that the boundaries of the Xhosa expanded with every generation when their sons left the family homes to find their own new kingdoms (Peires 2003, 26). In addition, the speed and velocity of this long-term process escalated rapidly and is noticeable in the establishment of new towns spreading form the Cape along the coastal interior to Natal and the rest of the South African interior.

Lastly, Eastern Cape societies were profoundly affected by this *multi-pronged* globalization process. For instance, Van Riebeeck's arrival brought a sense of permanence of European settlement to the southernmost part of the country, although it was not the original intension. Soon the Khoi population realized that European encroachment on their traditional pastures (Milton 1983, 3-4) would fundamentally change their existence. Similarly, Europeans were actively involved - as were the Settlers, in the Xhosa having lost their independence, when, in 1847 Sir Harry Smith annexed their land between the Keiskamma and Kei Rivers. Twenty years later, in January 1866, British Kaffraria was permanently incorporated into the Cape Colony.

Although not a focus for this paper, we need to be mindful that in these years, many Afrikaners/Dutch would leave the Eastern Cape on the Great Trek. New trade in labour between Europeans and Africans, led to a new class of permanent labourers. By 1829 two full generations of Xhosa were born and brought up on white farms. With regards to the 1820 Settlers, this phenomenon was only in the initial stages. New economic innovations in the form of e.g. colonial money and clothing represented a variety of artificially introduced wants. Production by Xhosa for markets was new as was such by the Settlers (Peires 2003, 117-220). In turn, the economic and political variables brought to the region by Settlers, were new to Xhosa and other traditional inhabitants of the region.

6. Conclusion

Historians inevitably deal with historical facts (Engelbrecht 2010, 40-52) and theories that pertain to their respective research fields – both facts and theories are necessary, but dialectically speaking, viewed as being limited in their application. Nevertheless, developments in science, technology and production, have broadened the scope and range of possibilities that humans face.

The same is true of the concept globalization and its association/s with the word "world." Our "world" is in essence a loose term in modern thought because it covers a diversity of stages, systems and human attitudes (Leff 1958, 11). From a historical perspective, it is clear that globalization takes place at different levels: between people, companies and governments of different nations. International trade, dating back to Ancient times has increases from $ 296 billion in the 1950s to $10 trillion in 2008. Not only have global consumers wider purchasing choices but almost instantaneous global financial disaster is a reality following global recessions. Furthermore, various forms of investment motivate this process. Both are supported by the ever-increasing information technology phenomena. The influences thereof are visible and experienced in the environment, on culture, on political systems, on economic development, and human physical well-being around the globe.

At first the accepted view was that the ancient classical 'world" consisted of the ancient Greeks and Romans (Fox 2007, 1). In the Middle Ages, corporations were buying and selling from and to each other over vast distances, e.g. the Silk Routes across Central Asia that linked China to Europe. Today, "Africa is now seen to have played a part of crucial importance in early human development" (Davidson 1991, 7).

Many so-called "world" histories have been attempted before (Barnes 1963, 139). What is certain today is that Africa and southern Africa have been part of worldwide trade since the English expansive interests in foreign trade from the 16th century (Toynbee 1949, 1). The basic concepts dealt with, will not be acceptable to all students of globalization because they are general in nature and need to be subjected to further investigation in order to find consensus.

If Milln is correct that the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo was "directly affecting British Colonial policy at the Cape of Good Hope that resulted in the arrival of the 1820 Settlers on the Eastern Cape frontier" (Jones 2002, 8-9), then our expanded view of globalization theory as presented above, is relevant. The period to *c.*1820 was arguably characterised by South Africa's integration into the larger world economy (Elphick and Giliomee 1979, xiii). For instance, Port Elizabeth's (also referred to as "Liverpool of the Cape") foundation and development into an economic centre that became the Eastern Cape's leading trading port by 1850, is a direct result of the expanding European economy. Soon Port

Elizabeth dominated the Cape wool exports to mainly Britain and USA, whilst Uitenhage dominated the wool washing industry in the Eastern Cape (Inggs 1988, 61, 71, 84). The above remains an elementary and provisional explanatory alternative indicating that globalization is not mutually exclusive from regional uniqueness.

Semantic confusion is a further challenge that historians need to overcome – globalization as a concept, is not immune, nor are the so-called periods of globalization, or the basic concepts, from misunderstanding. For instance, recently Nzimande used the term "internationalism" and argued against the propensity to withdraw into "narrow African chauvinism" (Nzimande 2009). These challenges, together with proposed new or re-interpretations, could partially be taken care of when critical theory is applied to arrive at new understandings of previous research problems.

Despite limitations, the proposed model above opens new possibilities for re-interpretation. An obvious advantage is the relative comparisons that can be made. Deterritorialization during the *modern* globalization period can be studied on its own, or compared with any one other globalization period, alternatively to others. The comparative historical method will enable a deeper understanding of historical phenomena as well as making new sources available for future research.

Contemporary historical studies are characterized *inter alia* by the continuous state of intellectual flux and proliferation of sub-disciplines. They all remain subject to spatial human acts, whether in urban, peri-urban or rural contexts. These contexts vary from those related to micro-history, to history of the largest scope. Even then, and despite the advantages of the analytical model above, the truth and nothing but the truth, about the history of human activities that leave global footprints, remains elusive. One such footprint "is because the capabilities of contemporary society are immeasurable greater than ever before – which means that the scope of society's domination over the individual, is immeasurably greater than ever before" (Marcuse 1966, x).

In summary: our proposed analytical model suggests that in studying the history of globalization, broad focus areas for research could include the following. Aspects of international trade, since its relative relationship to human migration – although noting new, has been undergoing profound structural changes. But such are (were) not possible without international investment programs.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is one of the most powerful causes and effects of globalization. It raises many questions about economic, cultural and political relationships around the world. From a historical perspective, how will one research and entirely inward perspective that focuses on domestic production to limit FDI, or any program focusing on import substitution industrialization (ISI) which refers to a policy based on the conviction that a nation should reduce its dependency on FDI and goods by domestic production of industrial

goods, be treated? This is a particular important theme given the current initiatives regarding job-creation in South Africa.

Environmental history in South Africa is well positioned to take the current research results to the next level. The relationship between economic development and environmental protection remains in balance. It has become an interesting research field when we consider the influence of public popular protests of interest groups vs. governmental/multi-national marriages.

Similarly, no corner of the world is unaffected by new technology. Recent advances in our ability and capacity to communicate, access and process information in digital format, are reshaping societies in totality – not just the economic and political spheres – across the world. The challenge is to consider that as quickly as new information becomes available as sources for historians, just as quick they disappear – mostly instantaneously and long before researchers can lay their hands on it. As powerful as the creation of a new spreadsheet might be, just as powerful is the "delete" or "empty recycle bin" buttons on any device. Consequently, websites in general, but history websites in particular, are powerful aids for historians. But even websites rely on a scarce resource – energy.

Most people take energy in whatever form, for granted. It is clear that this is no longer the case. The wide scale debates and efforts made to conserve resource and to find new ones, is nothing new to the historian – the fields of historical focus, and research outputs, however, might be. Human development is dependent on sustainable forms of energy – but the paradox is glaring. The multi-level global changes require historical investigation.

For the sake of brevity, we can only list a few more: global health issues; gender issues, good security, general security of other resource – e.g. water; education; development; international law; human rights and MNCs; governmental corruption and lack of service delivery.

Globalization is also a highly controversial phenomenon. For some, it enables poor countries to engage in economic development to raise their living standards. For others, globalization simply benefits multinational corporations in the West at the expense of local business, local cultures and the ordinary people.

The above (and other) realities compel the critical re-evaluation and -writing of South African history, since our argument was that in reality, South African history, since the beginning, never really stood outside of global events – not in colonial days, not since 1961, nor after 1994.

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